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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9791
INFO RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 0365
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000524

SIPDIS

FOR NEA/ARP, EEB/CBA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AFIN](#) [BEXP](#) [BTIO](#) [ECON](#) [EINV](#) [ETRD](#) [ADPM](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: OMAN FY08 BFIF PROGRAM INTERIM RESULTS

REF: A. STATE 73258

[1](#)B. MUSCAT 35

[1](#)1. Per ref A request, Embassy Muscat reports that \$1,252 has been spent from its FY 2008 Business Facilitation Incentive Fund (BFIF) account for the training of its Commercial Assistant at its Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) partnership post in Dubai. On January 28-30, the Commercial Assistant assisted her colleagues in working the U.S. Pavilion for the Arab Health trade show, one of the largest exhibitions in the region. Through her participation, the Commercial Assistant was exposed to the ways in which U.S. products are featured at exhibitions, what roles Commercial staff play in advertising the U.S. pavilion to conference attendees, how the Commercial Service manages trade booths, and what techniques are employed to distinguish U.S. products from their competitors. She will use the skills gained from this experience in delivering commercial services to U.S. clients in Oman.

[1](#)2. On the second funded project for FY 2008, the Embassy remains interested in building the membership and activities of the Muscat American Business Council (MABC). The MABC has posted a strong year, with a well-attended Ambassadorial reception, a reception for a visiting U.S. Chamber of Commerce official, and luncheon engagements with representatives of the Commerce Department, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, Booz Allen Hamilton, and the Salalah Free Zone, among others. However, the MABC continues to face challenges in serving as an independent, institutional voice for the American business community in Oman. These challenges are compounded by the fact that the MABC's executive director has taken on a full-time position with an Omani company. She continues to fulfill her MABC duties, but only on a part-time basis. It is unclear whether the MABC will have the financial resources to hire a new full-time executive director. For this reason, the Embassy will defer its request to host the executive director of the American Business Council of Dubai and the Northern Emirates (ABCD) until the MABC's executive director position is clarified.

[1](#)3. Embassy Muscat appreciates the opportunity to use the BFIF to advance USG commercial goals in Oman. The Embassy's point of contact for the BFIF program is now Economic/Commercial Officer Nicole Martin, phone (968) 2464-3623, GSM (mobile) (968) 9945-9887, email: MartinN@state.gov.
GRAPPO